

Re item V

- 1 Reference is made to the following documents:  
D1: DE 196 48 539 A1 (MANNESMANN VDO AG, 60388 FRANKFURT, DE;  
MANNESMANN VDO AG) 25 June 1998 (1998-06-25)  
D2: US 4 014 741 A (FOXWORTHY ET AL) 29 March 1977 (1977-03-29)
- 2 Document D1 (citing page 1) is considered to be the closest prior art. It discloses (D1: column 3, line 64 - column 4, line 10) a magnetically passive position sensor according to the precharacterizing clause of claim 1, in which a number of adjacent contact spring elements move simultaneously against corresponding contacts of the resistance device.  
The subject matter of the independent claim 1 differs from this in that each individual contact of the resistance device is assigned at least two tongues of the contact spring elements.
  - 2.1 The subject matter of claim 1 is therefore novel (PCT Article 33(2)). The problem addressed by the present invention can therefore be considered that of avoiding a reduction in the accuracy of the signals in dependence on the position of the magnet as a result of individual dirt particles.
  - 2.2 The solution to this problem that is proposed in claim 1 of the present application involves an inventive step (PCT Article 33(3)) for the following reasons:  
By means of the claimed design, if there is a dirt particle sticking to the contact, only the electrical connection of one of the tongues to the contact is prevented. As a result of the redundancy of the tongues assigned to each individual contact, however, it is still possible to generate correct signals of the position sensor. None of the documents cited in the search report discloses such redundancy of the tongues of the contact spring elements.
  - 2.3 Claim 2 is dependent on claim 1 and therefore likewise meets the PCT requirements for novelty and inventive step.

**Re item VIII**

1. For clarity (PCT Article 6), in claim 1, lines 11-12, "an individual contact (7)" should be replaced by "each individual contact (7)".